Approved For Release 2008/02/08 : CIA-RDP88B00443R001304050043-5

The Director of Central Intelligence

Washington D C 20505

27 April 1983

MEMORANDUM FOR: The Honorable William P. Clark
Assistant to the President
for National Security Affairs

FROM: Director of Central Intelligence

Bill:

Attached for your afternoon reading.

William J. Casey

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The battle for Reagan's heart

By NILES LATHEM
Bureau Chief

WASHINGTON — A huge "guerrilla war" is raging behind the scenes at the White House over President Reagan's speech to Congress tonight on Central America.

The war pits the conservatives led by national security adviser William Clark, presidential counsellor Edwin Meese, Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger and UN ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick against what White House aides are calling the "triple-D and B" combination of advisers led by White House chief of staff James Baker and Michael Deaver.

Reagan's speech, aimed at getting Congressional and public support for his efforts to fight Communist guerrillas in Central America, could set the scene for the final battle over the control of the President's heart and soul that has been simmering for weeks among the badly disjointed White House staff.

Both factions among Reagan's

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Guerrilla war at White House

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feuding advisers are taking a huge gamble.

Both sides hope reaction to tonight's speech will support arguments they have been making for weeks and solidify, once and for all, their position in the White House, knocking off the opposition at the same time.

The Triple-D and B combination, which includes the most Machiavellian aides in the White House — Baker, Deaver, Congressional liaison director Kenneth Duberstein and Baker aide Richard Darman — are actually hoping that Reagan's speech will be a flop, White House sources said.

This astonishing view is due in part to the fact that they advised Reagan against making the speech in the first place — believing that the high profile of a joint session of Congress, covered live, would give the impression that Reagan is a warmonger.

But they are also sore because Reagan, urged by Clark and Meese, overruled them and decided to give his speech.

If the speech is a flop, Baker and Deaver will tell Reagan, "We told you so," and move in for the kill against Meese and Clark.

Sources said that Baker, who operates the massive White House public relations machine, is doing nothing to drum up favorable reaction from Congress.

Baker also has the support of Thomas Enders, the State Department's top Latin American expert, who on the one hand is lobbying Congress in favor of Reagan's program while at the same time roaming the cocktail party circuit describing himself as a moderate opposed to the administration's hard line in Central America.

Clark and Meese, who are less skilled and less inclined to take part in the murky intrigues of the White House, are hoping that Reagan's speech is a smashing success.

For weeks there has been such a steady drumbeat of criticism of Clark and Meese — which the Triple D and B folks have encouraged — that the two men are on the verge of wanting to get out of the White House altogether.

Leak after leak has portrayed both as men without an agenda who are standing in the way of what the Triple D and B folk like to call "progressive compromise."

Favorable public reaction to Reagan's speech would mean a resurrection of Clark and Meese — and with them the resurrection of the conservative ideology they share with Reagan.

It could also make the two old California hands bold enough to approach the President and urge him to get rid of Baker and his cohorts — a move both have been mulling for weeks.

Clark, whose low profile cloaks a considerable flair for administration and a burning sense of loyalty, has recently begun to emerge from the White House shadows and is secretly taking control of Congressional lobbying for tonight's speech. He is hoping to line up the support Reagan needs to get the embattled Central America program out of Congressional committees led by hostile Democrats.

Secretary of State George Shultz, the top dog on foreign policy, conveniently is in the Middle East while all this is going on.

Reagan, when he leaves Congress tonight and gets back to the battle zone that is the White House, will have to face up to a guerrilla war that could be more troubling — and potentially more dangerous — than anything taking place in Central America.

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ARTICLE APPEARED ON PAGE A-17
WASHINGTON TIMES
26 APRIL 1983

ALICE IN POTOMAC LAND

Speech pits Baker against Clark

There is a lot more at stake for the administration than just the 55 advisers in El Salvador when Ronald Reagan goes on television tomorrow night to plead for support of his Central American policy. It could determine who will be running our country from now on — Jim Baker, the current man in charge, or national security adviser Bill Clark, whose policies Reagan will be advocating in tomorrow's speech.

Since Baker has developed a habit of opposing Clark on just about everything, forces loyal to the chief of staff are now required to question the wisdom of the Reagan address. According to one congressional Republican, Baker is telling his aides not to gin up the usual support for the speech, hoping that as the president's words die a quiet death, so, too, will Clark's powers of influence.

For his part, Clark already has former Sen. Dick Stone out drumming up support for the administration's policy on Capitol Hill. Pro-Reagan forces in the White House are banking heavily on a favorable public response and worry that Baker will succeed in removing the tough rhetoric needed to produce the desired result.

Opposition to Clark's Latin policy is surfacing from some surprising sources — Assistant Secretary of State Thomas Enders, for one. On the Georgetown party circuit, he's been describing himself to Democrats as their man in the State Department. "I keep the Reaganites honest," he was heard to say. Even the CIA's John MacMahon encourages friends to lobby Congress against "wasting" dollars in Central America.

Meanwhile, Sen. Chris Dodd has been doing some lobbying of his own. He wants a closed-door Senate session to discuss Central America, and he wants it before Reagan delivers his speech tomorrow night. The real purpose of a closed-door session is to put an official light on everything that leaks out (usually within six hours).

So, Dodd's goal is to frame the issue on his own terms in advance of the Reagan address.

It puts Senate Majority Leader Howard Baker on the spot. If he grants Dodd's request, it will be interpreted as strengthening Jim Baker's hand.

Guerrilla warfare in Central America is nothing compared to what is going on right here in our own backyard.

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